

CLAIMS

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1. A unit for automatically crimping ribbons of flexible flat cable, said ribbon comprising at least one branch onto which a connector is to be crimped, said unit being characterized in that it comprises:

- a guide surface on which the ribbon of flat cable travels,
- a number of crimping stations arranged vertically offset plumb with the plane of the guide surface and designed to crimp a connector onto the end of a branch, and
- a number of tilting ramps which have a first end even with the plane of the guide surface when they are in the tilted state and a second end even with a crimping station, said ramp being arranged in the opposite direction to the direction of travel of the ribbon, each ramp being designed to tilt toward the guide surface on command so that a predetermined branch of the ribbon follows the ramp it encounters in its path as it travels along and so that it is directed to one of the crimping stations where it receives a connector.

2. The crimping unit as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that each tilting ramp is associated with a given crimping station toward which it directs a branch of the ribbon of flat cable for crimping.

3. The crimping unit as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
characterized in that the guide surface drives the ribbon in
two opposite directions of travel.

5 4. The crimping unit as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3,
characterized in that the ribbon of flat cable is driven along
the guide surface by rollers which have two directions of
rotation.

10 5. The crimping unit as claimed in any of the preceding
claims, characterized in that the rollers driving the ribbon
along can retract vertically so that they do not damage the
connectors crimped onto the ribbon.

15 6. A crimping process employing the crimping unit as claimed
in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that it
consists in:

- driving a ribbon of flat cable along a guide surface,
- 20 - commanding the tilting of at least one tilting ramp so that
at least one branch of the ribbon follows the tilted ramp and
is directed to a corresponding crimping station, and
- crimping a connector onto the branch when its presence in a
crimping station is detected.